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VIA Air
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DISPATCH NO. OELA-15704

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TO ☒ Chief, WE

DATE 7 August 1956

FROM ☐

INFO: COS, Germany
COB, Munich

SUBJECT { GENERAL REDSOX/AERODYNAMIC
SPECIFIC 0 Disappearance of SKOB

REFERENCE: OELA-13302

1. The letter quoted below has just been received from SMOTHER, signed by ☐ ☐

"1. Please refer to your letter 9441 of 25 January 1956 and subsequent correspondence on the subject of the disappearance of SKOB.

"2. Although no further information has reached us on the present location or fate of SKOB, we recently received a letter from PIDHAJNYJ, our former Head Agent for Ukrainian Affairs, which may have a bearing on the matter. PIDHAJNYJ is well-known to many of your officers. Extracts from his letter are attached. As you will see they deal with an RIS approach to Modest RIPECKYJ, a former agent of ours and associate of PIDHAJNYJ. The first approach took place at the time of SKOB's disappearance in MUNICH. It is impossible at this juncture to say if there is any connection between the two events.

"3. According to PIDHAJNYJ, RIPECKYJ reported the approach to a CIC office in MUNICH and the RIS courier was arrested on his return to MUNICH in March, 1956. Although we have ceased all operational dealings with the groups in the Ukraine with which we were in touch, we are still interested in trying to solve a number of security problems in connection with them. Consequently I would be most grateful if you could obtain for us the results of the CIC interrogation of the RIS courier to RIPECKYJ."

2. The extracts from PIDHAJNYJ's letter, referred to above, are attached.

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3. I request that Headquarters comply with the SMOTH request for the report on the CIC interrogation of the RIS courier to RIPECKYJ mentioned in the last sentence of the SMOTH letter quoted above.

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Distribution:

- 3 - WE w/attachmt - 2cc.
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- 2 - Munich w/attachmt 2cc

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Extracts from RIPECKYJ's Letter

JP

"On Monday, 25th June 1956, I learned from [REDACTED] the following: on the 7th January, 1956 (it was our Christmas and SHOI was visiting me) RIPECKYJ also received a visitor. An unknown Ukrainian came to his house (he lives with his wife and six year old son in a suburb near MURCHEN-BUT VIGREED). After a long point-less conversation he announced himself as a travelling salesman who, in order to make a living, was also forced to carry out illegal transactions. He claimed he had also been in LVOV, where he had seen [REDACTED] to RIPECKYJ's parents. He said that all was well with the parents, the father - a pensioned Government lawyer, a former Poland, the mother, two sisters and the brother, who is now over twenty years old, all of whom are living in the old house in LVOV. The visitor stated further that one of his sisters was a doctor, the other a pharmacist, and the brother, who is studying medicine, holds the post of Secretary to the Konsomol. The only thing that is worrying the parents is the uncertainty over the fate of RIPECKYJ. As proof that he had seen the parents, the visitor gave RIPECKYJ a photograph of his parents and a letter from his father which was definitely in the hand-writing of the father. In this letter, amongst other things, his father asked RIPECKYJ to follow the advice of the bearer, which seemed to RIPECKYJ to be most unusual. RIPECKYJ recognised his parents and brother and sisters in the picture, but the furniture was strange. It seemed as though the picture had been made in a well-equipped office. The visitor stated further that RIPECKYJ's parents had had no news of RIPECKYJ and were inclined to believe that he was dead. Consequently, RIPECKYJ should write to his parents and enclose a picture of himself. The visitor promised to forward the letter to the parents. RIPECKYJ's sister had sent him some money, roubles, and the visitor gave RIPECKYJ 300 DM. At the end of this short visit the guest took his leave, with the intention of returning within a few days to fetch the letter and photo.

When he returned and found out that RIPECKYJ had neither a letter nor a photo ready he became aggressive and finally declared that he was an agent of the MVD and was on a mission for them. Under no circumstances should RIPECKYJ emigrate to the U.S.A., in fact, he should not leave Germany. The MVD would guarantee a living for RIPECKYJ, they would finance the opening of a private practice for him, or they would arrange for him to obtain a good position in a hospital. His former activities with the UFA would be overlooked and he would not be punished, exactly as with himself, the visitor, who had also fought with the UFA in VOLYNIA. Should RIPECKYJ, however, betray the cause, no power in the world could help him. The mightarm of the MVD would be able to reach him anywhere. The visit lasted quite a long time. The visitor spoke quite openly and as if RIPECKYJ had already agreed. He took his leave at night and promised to return at the beginning of March.

On the next day, 9th January 1956, RIPECKYJ decided to tell me the whole story and arrived about 10 a.m. at my house. Unfortunately I was not at home as I had already departed for the printing works at 0630. About 12 o'clock RIPECKYJ came to the printing works. It was the lunch break, 1200 - 1230, and I had gone to drink my cup of coffee. As RIPECKYJ left the printing works, nearly in despair at not having met me, he spotted the agent in the immediate neighbourhood of the station, who, according to RIPECKYJ, did not see him. In desperation RIPECKYJ went to his clinic and told the story in rough outline to a well known Ukrainian-American who worked in the same clinic, and asked him, in connection with this affair, to introduce him to the American CIC office.

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When he at last arrived at the CIC place, he handed over the letter, the photograph, and the 300 DM and explained the whole case. The Americans decided to arrest the agent although everybody was convinced he would not appear in March. At all events, they promised to keep in touch with him and miking apparatus was fitted up in his house. RIPECKYJ was promised that the agent would be arrested in such a manner that RIPECKYJ would not be compromised, with regard to the fact that his parents were in Russian hands.

11? At the beginning of March as promised the agent appeared. He brought some new photos with him showing the agent together with RIPECKYJ's family. He handed over the photos remarking that they had been taken in RIPECKYJ's old house in order that he could recognise the furniture. (RIPECKYJ had only mentioned to the CIC people the point about the furniture in the first photo!) The agent invited RIPECKYJ to come to his rooms in the DACHAUER Strasse on the next day, where he had something to give to RIPECKYJ which he did not want to carry about, which would be a surprise for him. He did not mention anything about a task for RIPECKYJ, this would be discussed with the Chief. Now that RIPECKYJ would have more money he should be very careful with it so that it would not be noticed in the neighbourhood. He promised to arrange a meeting for RIPECKYJ with his sister who would be brought to FREIBURG, since RIPECKYJ should, on no account, disappear for any length of time. He warned RIPECKYJ again that should there be any betrayal on his part he could reckon with very strong punishment. He hinted at the disappearance of a whole host of people from this or that side of the Iron Curtain. He asked a lot about RIPECKYJ's son, such as what he liked to do and what sort of toys he liked best etc.

As the agent left shortly after midnight he was arrested at the entrance by several Americans. He offered absolutely no resistance, held up his hands and when asked to identify himself said: "I am a NKVD agent". RIPECKYJ has no idea what transpired after this, or so he claims, since he has seen no Americans since March. They came to his house a few days after the arrest, dismantled the miking apparatus thanked him for his help, and gave him 300 DM, this time from the Americans, as compensation for loss of time etc.

When I asked him why he had not told me about this at the time he gave the following reasons. He had panicked. When he failed to meet me and went to the CIC he had been forbidden by them to speak to anybody about this affair. Furthermore he was convinced that we had no more contact with him because I had officially informed him that our group was being disbanded and the work being stopped. In particular his wife lost her nerve since she was afraid that her son would be kidnapped."

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